

Germany guest of honor at intl cooperation event

By ZHUAN TI

Southwest China's Sichuan province is deepening cooperation with Germany, thanks to the 16th Western China International Fair held in Chengdu, the provincial capital, earlier this month.

Germany is the guest of honor at this year's event. German Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel led a delegation of nearly 500 members to the fair, according to organizers. The German pavilion at the fair covered a total area of 2,040 square meters, with 80 German exhibitors taking part.

A series of activities related to Germany took place during the fair, including a China-Germany economic forum and 10 other activities, such as the "German Night" reception, a Sino-German forum on intelligent manufacturing and the Industry 4.0 strategy, a Sino-German energy efficiency technology forum and the Bavaria Forum.

More than 350 delegates from both countries attended the China-Germany Economic Forum. The two sides vowed to enhance economic ties.

"The event offers a perfect chance for German companies to get to know the investment and development opportunities in Sichuan and western China," said Gabriel, adding that he looks forward to deeper cooperation between Chinese and German companies.

Gabriel visited Sichuan as a tourist 12 years ago. He said he was deeply impressed by the great changes and fast development of the province.

He said there are two key features that impress him about Sichuan: The speed of economic growth in Sichuan nears double digits and the population exceeds 80 million, which is about the same as the German population.

Great changes in Sichuan reflect the opportunities created by China's go-west campaign, and he would like German companies to involve themselves in the rise of western China, Gabriel said.

Gabriel suggested that Sichuan could have more cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises in Germany.

"Large companies represent Germany's industrial strength, while numerous SMEs are the source for the German economy," he said.

German SMEs have great capacity in innovation and they could provide an endless source for cooperation between Germany and Sichuan, he said.

Gabriel also encourages more Chinese companies to invest in Germany.

"Germany is an open market, with no restrictions except for matters concerning security interests," he said. "Germany will treat Chinese investors as it does German companies."

Sichuan and Germany agreed

to several big cooperation projects during the event.

A Sino-German innovative industrial cooperation park, which covers a total area of 22 square kilometers, was inaugurated in Chengdu Science City, a new-technology, industry and business hub in the Sichuan Tianfu New Area.

Liu Yutong, director of the investment services bureau at the Chengdu administrative committee of the Tianfu New Area, said the Sino-German innovative industrial cooperation park is the main platform for Sichuan to conduct innovative cooperation with Germany.

It has planned 10 industrial zones, covering fields such as scientific research innovation, medical care, intelligent manufacturing, and international trade and business.

Six companies signed cooperation agreements with the Chengdu administrative committee of Tianfu New Area and Chengdu Tianfu New Area Investment Group Co Ltd at the inauguration ceremony, with a total investment of 4 billion yuan (\$590 million).

The cooperation projects mainly focus on advanced manufacturing, environmental protection, research and development, and high-end services.

BMW China Automotive Trading Ltd will cooperate with Global Car-sharing to offer electric car time-share leasing services to residents in Tianfu New Area.

BMW China plans to provide 100 BMW i3 vehicles, and customers in the Tianfu New Area will be able to rent the cars via an app on their smart phones.

Germany-based ALBA Group PLC and Co KC, a recycling and environmental services company, will cooperate with local companies to offer services in the Tianfu New Area, including water treatment, solid waste disposal, river improvement and a "sponge city" project.

Axel Schweitzer, chairman of ALBA Group, said the group has established a joint venture with Chengdu Techent Environment Industry Co Ltd, which is reportedly the largest cooperation between German and Chinese companies in the field of environmental protection.

The projects in the Tianfu New Area will be implemented by the joint venture, Schweitzer said.

Deng Qinhua, chairman of Techent, said the company has set up an innovation center and an engineering technology center in Chengdu Science City. He is considering moving the company's headquarters to the region.

During the event, an industrial fund with total investment of 5 billion yuan was established to provide German companies that invest in Sichuan with financial support.

The fund will focus on high-tech industries, such as high-end equipment manufacturing, new energy, and environmental protection.



A visitor experiences virtual reality technologies at the 16th Western China International Fair in Chengdu, Sichuan province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

DEEPENING GLOBAL TIES

Western China investment fest sees deals worth billions of yuan signed, as Belt and Road nations seek greater collaboration, **Zhuan Ti** reports.

The 16th Western China International Fair, a State-level international expo, concluded in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, on Nov 14 with fruitful results.

A total of 1,008 investment projects worth 787.7 billion yuan (\$116.6 billion) were signed between investors from home and abroad.

Sichuan province attracted 836 investment projects, with total investments amounting to 657.3 billion yuan. Of them, 21 projects were signed with foreign investors, with total foreign investment reaching 17.5 billion yuan.

Twelve provinces, municipality and autonomous regions in western China, as well as the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, proposed another 3,131 projects worth 4.55 trillion yuan to investors from around the world during the event.

Debuting in 2000 as part of the central government's go-west campaign, the Western China International Fair picked Chengdu as its permanent home.

Over the years, the event has worked as an important platform for western China to boost its opening-up, and to facilitate investment and trade cooperation with foreign countries and other parts of China.

In March 2015, the event was listed as one of 10 major national exhibitions and conventions facilitating the

Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013.

Under the theme of "Western China, Opportunities for the World", the event this year lasted for nearly two weeks, attracting delegates from 91 countries and regions.

They included President of Guinea Alpha Conde, President of the Serb Republic Milorad Dodik, German Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel, and Afghanistan's Second Vice-President Mohammad Sarwar Danish.

As Germany is the guest of honor at the event, Vice-Chancellor Gabriel led a delegation of 500 members, including executives from Bayer AG, Deutsche Lufthansa AG and Siemens AG.

The exhibition halls covered a total area of 200,000 square meters. According to the organizers, 16 countries set up national pavilions, more than any of the previous 15 sessions of the fair.

Nearly 9,000 companies from around the world attended the fair, including industrial giants, such as BMW AG, Daimler AG, Metro, DHL Express, Google Inc and Huawei Technologies Co Ltd.

A total of 3,069 companies from Sichuan province attended the fair, covering exhibition areas of 68,000 square meters.

The exhibition section of Sichuan features advanced industries such as advanced equipment manufacturing, aerospace, electronic infor-



We would like to share these development opportunities with countries around the world."

Wang Dongming, Party chief of Sichuan

and new energy. The fair highlighted elements of China's Belt and Road Initiative, with four halls featuring the initiative set up.

Exhibitors from 27 countries and regions along the Belt and Road attended the fair, with total exhibition area of 35,000 square meters.

Major activities, such as the opening ceremony, the eighth Western China International Cooperation Forum, and the ninth Western China Investment Promotion Fair, all had the Belt and Road Initiative as a major topic.

Wang Dongming, Party chief of Sichuan, said the province has great potential and bright prospects for development as it is located at the intersection of the Silk Road Eco-

development of Afghanistan, as the country was an important passage along the ancient Silk Road.

"Afghanistan is willing to take an active part in the construction of the Belt and Road," Danish said.

He said Afghanistan abounds in iron and copper ore, gemstones and stones for decoration. China can invest in the fields and Afghanistan can sell its products to China.

Dodik, president of the Serb Republic, said his country has cooperated with China in the construction of the Belt and Road.

With investment from China, construction of a thermal power station started in the Serb Republic last month. The main contract for the station is with Dongfang Electric Corp, a State-owned company headquartered in Chengdu.

The project has created more than 1,000 jobs in the Serb Republic and it is the largest direct foreign investment the country has received in recent years, he said.

This cooperation is only the beginning, Dodik said, and he expects deeper and wider cooperation with China in areas such as energy, transportation infrastructure, culture and education.

At the end of this year, a Confucius Institute will also be launched in the Serb Republic.

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The fair enables visitors to shop around, seek business opportunities and experience the latest technologies. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



BMW AG's i8 plug-in sports car is displayed at the fair. PENG CHAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Region's economic powerhouse harnesses high-tech production

By CHINA DAILY

Sichuan province, an economic engine in western China, is a top destination in the region for high-tech projects from home and abroad.

The province attracted a number of such projects during the 16th Western China International Fair earlier this month.

Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, signed three investment agreements with Zhejiang Geely Holding Group to strengthen cooperation in auto manufacturing.

One of the projects will be located in the Tianfu New Area, China's 11th national-level development area, which the State Council approved in October 2014. It will produce high-performance blade electric vehicles under the Volvo brand as well as domestic-brand blade electric vehicles.

The second project will bring in Volvo Scalable Product Architecture, a global full-size unibody automobile platform developed and produced by Volvo.

The third project will produce Geely's BMA vehicles, using the latest modular architecture platform jointly developed with Volvo, as well as advanced hybrid and plug-in hybrid power systems.

The three projects will have a combined annual production capacity of 600,000 units.

Geely began investing in Sichuan in 2007 by setting up a manufacturing base in Chengdu. In 2010, the company purchased Volvo, which is headquartered in Gothenburg, Sweden, and later built Volvo's first manufacturing plant on the Chinese mainland in Chengdu.

Volvo's new luxury sedan, the S60 Inscription, has been manufactured in the Chengdu plant and exported to the United States since September 2015.

Geely is also building a manufacturing base for its new energy commercial vehicles in Nanchong, Sichuan province, with a total invest-

ment of 7 billion yuan (\$1.02 billion).

The company expects the Nanchong base to be completed by July 2017. It will have an annual production capacity of 100,000 vehicles and 50,000 powertrains upon completion.

Li Donghui, executive vice-president of Geely, said the three projects

10 general aviation firms

in Sichuan province

will further boost the development of Geely's Chengdu base. He expects the annual output value of the Chengdu base to reach 100 billion yuan after the projects are fully completed and put into use.

"We will build the Chengdu base into one of Geely's most important strategic bases for new energy vehicles designed for the markets along the Belt and Road," he said.

The auto industry is a pillar of Sichuan's economy. Last year, the province produced more than 1 million cars.

The Chengdu city government also signed a strategic cooperation agreement with a group of leading new energy carmakers to establish a new energy vehicle industry alliance.

The Chengdu New Energy Vehicle Industry Alliance aims to establish a cooperation platform for the whole industrial chain of Chengdu's new energy auto sector, helping to make the city a manufacturing hub for new energy vehicles with international competitiveness.

Germany-based Siemens AG signed an agreement worth 1 billion yuan with BOE Technology Group Co Ltd's Chengdu subsidiary to help the latter upgrade its production line. According to the agreement, Siemens will transform BOE's production line in Chengdu according to the German Industry 4.0 strategy's standards.

During the Western China International Fair held in 2011, Siemens

signed an investment agreement with the Chengdu Hi-tech Industrial Development Zone to establish the company's first modern digital factory in China.

Siemens announced in July that it would increase its presence in Chengdu, by setting up an independent legal corporation with registered capital of 330 million yuan to operate its current Chengdu factory.

"As it turns out, choosing Chengdu was a wise decision," said Roland Busch, a member of Siemens' managing board, during this year's Western China International Fair.

He said the Chengdu factory is a model for Siemens' digital factories and a representative project of Germany's Industry 4.0 strategy.

The province's aviation industry also drew cooperation projects during the fair. Beichuan Qiang autonomous county signed an agreement with Tianjin Huake General Aviation Co Ltd, to construct a general aviation industrial project, with total investment of 360 million yuan.

Deyang city signed a memorandum of understanding with the Sino-Czech Aviation and Aerospace Association to hold an international aviation and aerospace exhibition at Deyang Guanghan Airport in 2017.

The province currently has 10 general aviation companies and eight general aviation airports. It plans to have more than 80 general aviation airports by 2030.

Sichuan has a solid foundation for the aviation and aerospace industries. One of China's major aerospace centers, Chengdu has rich experience in the research and development of national key aircraft including the F-7, FC-1/JF-17, F-10 jets and some unmanned aerial vehicles.

China's first domestically designed large passenger jetliner, the Comac C919, is equipped with many components and parts made in Chengdu, including its nose, in-flight entertainment system and communication and navigation systems.

Participants give thumbs up to fair

By ZHUAN TI

Delegates from around the world spoke highly of the recently held Western China International Fair, as well as its host, Sichuan province.

Rainer Becker, chief executive officer of car2go China Co Ltd and head of business development Asia-Pacific for car2go Group GmbH, wholly-owned subsidiaries of Daimler AG, said the fair offered him a great opportunity to meet business partners from all over the world.

"The event is very well organized," he said. "It focuses on so many fields, such as mobility, new energy, emergency equipment and aviation, enabling participants to communicate with different people and on different topics."

Sam Guo, chief operating officer of car2go China, said the company is planning to expand its business in the country, with Chengdu among the targeted destinations.

Christian Hartel, a director of Wacker Chemie AG, a chemical company, said the fair is an important platform for international companies to develop cooperation in western China.

He said he came to the fair to showcase his company's latest products and technologies because the region has great market potential with its fast economic development and the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Farkas Balazs Hadady, Hungarian commercial counselor in Chongqing, said he is positive about future cooperation between Hungary and Sichuan.

"China's Belt and Road Initiative is in accord with Hungary's global opening-up policy," he said. "We expect increasing cooperation with

Sichuan as the province lies at a key spot on the Belt and Road."

The fair provides Hungarian companies with a perfect chance to find business partners in Sichuan and western China, he said. More than 20 Hungarian companies attended the fair, the largest Hungarian delegation in the event's history.

Mariella Lo Bello, vice-president of the Sicilian region in Italy, led a delegation of 30 businesspeople and officials from the region. She said Sichuan is one of Sicily's most important partners.

"China and Italy have established strong ties as two important countries on the east and west sides of the Silk Road," she said. "Sicily has included cooperation with China, especially with Sichuan, in its international development planning."

Lo Bello said she hopes the two countries will have more cooperative projects in fields such as nanotechnology and biological medicine to promote innovation-driven development.

Robin Niethammer, chairman of the southwest branch of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China, said Chengdu's advanced transportation network, including the Chengdu-Europe Express Rail that links western China with Europe, strengthens Sino-European ties and makes it more convenient for international companies to invest in Sichuan.

"The huge market in western China and the local government's preferential policies also attract a great number of investors," he said. Niethammer said more than 300 companies in the European Union have a presence in Chengdu, including Volvo AB, Siemens AG and Peugeot SA.



Delegates from various countries explore cooperation probabilities at the fair held in Chengdu recently. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Silk Road to expand reach via Chengdu-Europe Express Rail

By CHINA DAILY

Sichuan province in Southwest China is facilitating cooperation and exchanges with more countries and regions along the Belt and Road, with an intercontinental railway network connecting it to Europe and other parts of Asia.

At the 16th Western China International Fair held in Sichuan earlier this month, the province announced that it has expanded the Chengdu-Europe Express Rail to Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

As of Nov 2, a freight train now travels from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, to Rotterdam on a weekly basis. Its cargo mainly includes machinery and electronics made in Sichuan.

The return train carries products including electronic components, infant milk powder, wine and beer, according to Chen Jie, deputy general manager of Chengdu International Railway Service Co Ltd, which manages the operation of the express rail.

He said cargo made in Sichuan can be transported through the express rail to Rotterdam within 13 days, and then easily distributed to western and northern Europe, and even North

Maritime Silk Road initiatives proposed by President Xi Jinping.

The route stretches 9,826 kilometers, almost along the ancient Silk Road, linking Chengdu with Lodz, an emerging European logistics hub in Poland.

The Chengdu-Lodz route is the fastest and most frequently used direct freight service from China to Europe. A one-way trip takes 10 days, according to Chen Zhongwei, director of Chengdu Port and Logistics Office.

The express rail gives Sichuan province an advantage over the eastern coastal provinces when it comes to trading with Europe, because the rail route is much faster than sea transportation. Transportation by rail takes one-third of the time taken by sea routes, and costs one-sixth to one-eighth of air transportation, Chen said.

To take full advantage of this rail route, the province has implemented a strategy called Chengdu-Europe Plus. This refers to increased rail connections with both domestic and European cities, making Chengdu a logistics hub for Europe and Asia.

Apart from Rotterdam, the Chengdu-Lodz route has expanded to European cities including Kutno in Poland,

Nuremberg in Germany and Tilburg in the Netherlands. Offices and distribution centers have also been set up in major European cities along the route to further explore the European market.

According to the latest Chengdu-Europe Plus strategy, the Chengdu-Europe Express Rail will include three major routes: one to Lodz, another to Istanbul in Turkey and the third to Russia.

Chen said three test trains have run through the Chengdu-Istanbul route since Sept 6. The route is expected to begin official operation by the end of this year.

He said the third link, the Chengdu-Russia route, is scheduled to open in November. The Chengdu-Europe Express Rail has also expanded to domestic cities, including Xiamen in Fujian province, Shenzhen in Guangdong province, Kunming in Yunnan province and Ningbo in Zhejiang province. This enables Sichuan to have deeper connections with other provinces, Southeast Asia, Japan and South Korea.

Business through the express rail is surging thanks to the implementation of the Chengdu-Europe Plus

strategy. An increasing number of companies around the country are making use of the express rail, including DHL Express, Lenovo Group Ltd, TCL Corp, Koninklijke Philips NV, Dell Inc and the Volvo Group.

Chen expects the express rail to run 400 journeys this year and 1,000 journeys next year.

During the 16th Western China International Fair, four investment projects worth 2.1 billion yuan (\$306.9 million) were signed to locate companies in the Chengdu International Railway Port, the departure station of the Chengdu-Europe Express Rail.

Along with the expansion of its international railway network, Sichuan is also more closely tied to the world through the construction of the "air Silk Road."

The Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, the largest aviation hub in western China, has opened nearly 100 international routes, connecting Sichuan to more than 70 international cities including San Francisco, Frankfurt, Paris and Melbourne.

The province also began construction of a new airport, Chengdu Tianfu International Airport, in May. The new airport will be put into operation in 2020.



Visitors show interest in technologies displayed at the German exhibition section of the fair. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Chengdu's exhibition section at the fair shows the provincial capital's ambition to become a national central city. PENG CHAO / FOR CHINA DAILY